

What is Buddhism? E-Course

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DISCOVER THE ORIGINAL TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

Win the Highest Point in Human Evolution by Mastering the Authentic Meditation Skills of the Buddha. Gain Perfection in Physical and Mental Health & Happiness. Make a Paradigm Shift from Existence to Experience, which will Awaken you from the Dream of Existence and Set You Free from every SUFFERING including DEATH itself and that means

IMMORTALITY

FOR EVER

You can't practice Buddhism without having a good background knowledge. As the Buddha pointed out, "I don't lead the blind to their destination by holding hands. I help them regain their visions, and point the path, so that they can find their way by themselves."

**You are about to receive the knowledge and vision necessary to
enter and progress**

on the spiritual path shown by the Buddha

Listen carefully

BUDDHISM DEMYSTIFIED

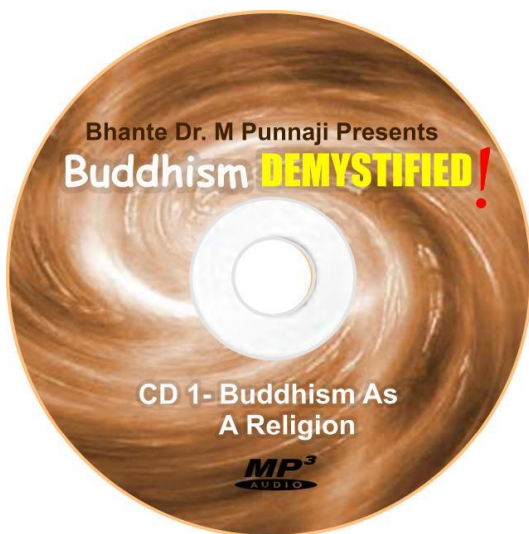
Let go of meaningless dogmas and rituals and

Understand the original teachings of the Buddha in terms of religion, philosophy, psychology & practice

At the end of this course, you will be able to understand:

- **Buddhism As A Religion**—Discover how Buddhism becomes a religion despite its apparent atheism which rejects the idea of a Creator. Look at religion from a modern anthropological and humanistic point of view rather than from a narrow minded, dogmatic and cultural point of view.
- **Buddhism As Philosophy**—Discover the original teachings of the Buddha as it is found in the earliest sources. We call this Buddhism "Proto Buddhism" to identify it as the prototype from which all other modern schools of Buddhism have originated.
- **Buddhism As A Psychology**—Discover Buddhism as a science more than as a dogmatic religion based on blind faith. Learn its purest form as an introspective mental science, which focuses on the inner experience rather than the outer.
- **Buddhism in Practice**—Discover the practice of Buddhism as the solution of a psychological problem. It is not mere prayer and worship or blind obedience to rules. Learn it as a "do-it-yourself" method of psychotherapy, and a gradual process of growth and maturity. It is not, however, an instantaneous cure.

CD 1 -BUDDHISM AS A RELIGION



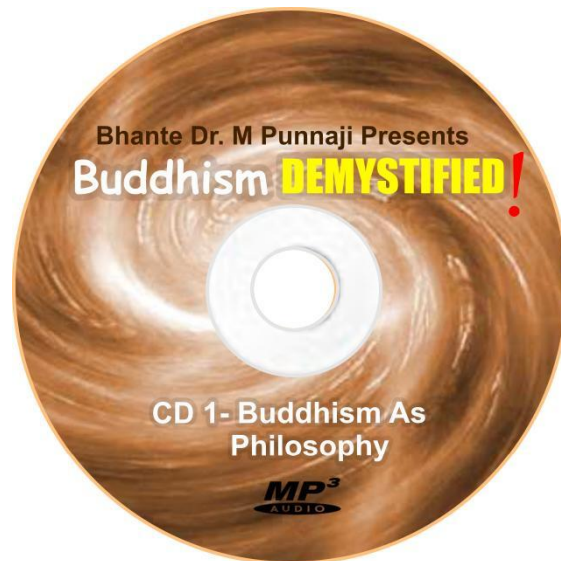
Most modern approaches to the definition of religion consider religion to be the worship of a Supernatural Creator or Superhuman gods. The belief in supernatural beings and supernatural powers seem to be at the center of all relations. Therefore Buddhism that rejects the idea of a Creator is often considered to be an atheistic philosophy rather than a religion. This is to degrade religious values by taking religion to be a primitive superstitious belief and practice, quite unsuitable for modern scientific thinking people. By disregarding religious values this way, modern people tend to throw away the baby with the bath water. Those who have believed morality to be the dictates of the Creator are now at a loss searching for a proper basis of moral values.

Our aim here is to offer a better definition of religion that not only preserves the respect for religious values, but also points out how Buddhism becomes a religion despite its apparent atheism. We do not deal with religion from a narrow minded, dogmatic, and cultural point of view. We deal with religion from a modern anthropological and humanistic point of view. We examine religion from a broad and scientific perspective. We do not see a conflict between religion and science either. We also see a unity in the diversity of religious beliefs and practices. Buddhists do believe in a God, though not the Creator of the world.

Modern Western philosophers have already recognized that an all powerful, all knowing and all loving God cannot be the Creator of a world where one animal lives at the expense of the others. How can a world full of suffering, crime, and war be the creation of an all loving and all powerful God? Obviously God cannot be the Creator of the world. "God," for the Buddhist, is a human concept. It is the concept of perfection, which is commonly expressed as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnibenevolence. This state of perfection becomes an ideal to be realized through the practice of religion. All religions speak about union with God. What can this mean other than to realize this ideal of perfection? When a person does realize this ideal, he is called God become (*Brahma bhuto*). *Brahma* is the Indian word for God. This spiritual perfection is what the Buddha achieved and therefore the Buddha is the anthropomorphic God of the Buddhist. Buddhism is not an atheistic philosophy but a humanistic religion whose aim is to solve the problem of existence, which is the insecurity of life. All religions are attempting to solve this same basic problem of existence, which is death and suffering. Although some try to run away from the reality of death and suffering into the fantasy where there is eternal life and eternal happiness, the Buddhist attempts to face the reality and discover the cause of the problem within one's own mind, and solve the problem by eliminating the cause.

- i. Introduction- Magic and Religion. Religion is evolutionary adaptation.**
- ii. Evolution biological and psychological – Religion is scientific- (Aggañña Sutta)**
- iii. Theology- Comparative Theology- Theistic and Humanistic definition of God**
- iv. Cosmology- Comparative Buddhist and Astronomical thinking**
- v. Eschatology- Realms of existence, Rebirth, Karma and Samsara**
- vi. Soteriology- Immortality the salvation of man in Nirvana**
- vii. Conclusion- Buddhism is religion advanced to its culmination or ultimate climax.**

CD 2-BUDDHISM AS PHILOSOPHY



As a philosophy Buddhism deals with the common questions that philosophers have set out to answer. A study of this philosophy reveals the profundity of the teachings of the Buddha. Here we do not deal with the dogmatic views of the different schools of Buddhism found in the modern world. An effort has been made to arrive at the original teachings of the Buddha as it is found in the earliest sources. We call this Buddhism “Proto Buddhism” to identify it as the prototype from which all other modern schools of Buddhism have originated.

- i. Introduction- Definition of philosophy
- ii. Epistemology- The search for truth
- iii. Ethics- The meaning of goodness
- iv. Mysticism- Why do people renounce worldly comforts and practice asceticism?
- v. Metaphysics- The search for reality
- vi. Meta-psychology- The emptiness (suññatha) of all phenomena.

Existence is an experience, which is the reaction of an organism to environmental stimulation, which is a chain reaction consisting of perception, conception, emotion and action. Experience is bilateral consisting of a subjective and an objective duality, normally observed as a subjective and objective existence. Experience is only an activity that continues, and not an entity that exists. Experience is an activity dependent for its continuation on the necessary conditions. There is no reality outside experience. Experience is the only reality to be referred to. This only reality is not what is experienced (as phenomenon) or what is not experienced (as the noumenon) but experience itself, which is only how what is experienced, is experienced. Existence is only a static concept in a dynamic reality. One can experience existence, which is not real, or one can experience experience which is real. This experiencing of experience instead of experience is a paradigm shift from “existence” to “experience.” It is, seeing experience as experience, instead of as existence.

This paradigm shift involves apperception (Abhiñña). Experience has three constituents:

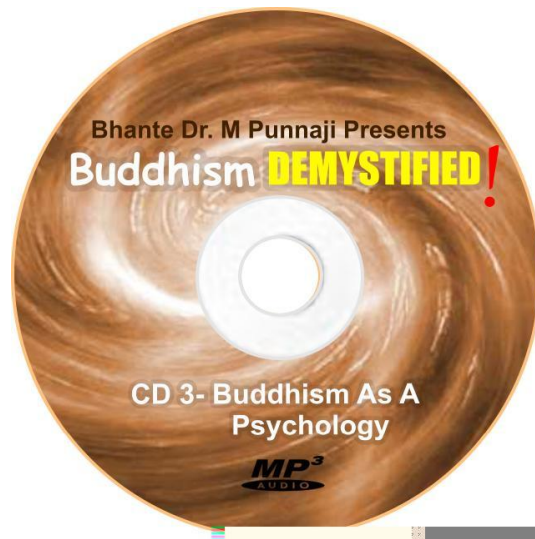
- 1) What is experienced (the object that seems to exist)
- 2) Who experiences (the subject that seems to exist)
- 3) The experience itself (the activity that continues dependent on conditions)

The subject and object are only products of the activity called experience. When this is clearly comprehended (pariñña), one awakens from the dream of existence, and ceases to be a person of the world. One has transcended the world, and has entered reality (Tathagata:- Thatha= reality, gatha= arrived at). (Story about a brahmin asking the Buddha whether he was a deva).

Apperception (Abhiñña) and Comprehension (Pariñña) together is called Apprehension (Pañña)

vii. Conclusion- Buddhism is philosophical thinking at the ultimate level. Buddha is the ultimate stage in the evolutionary process.

CD 3- BUDDHISM AS A PSYCHOLOGY



We consider Buddhism to be a science more than a dogmatic religion based on blind faith. Yet we consider it to be experiential rather than empirical. It is also an introspective mental science, rather than an “extrospective” physical science. It is a science because it uses the scientific method, which is observation, inference, and experimental verification, though focused on the inner experience, rather than the outer. Today, the Behaviorists have been critical about introspection, holding that it is unscientific, but the modern school of psychology known as Cognitive Psychology has realized that introspection cannot be avoided if we want to study the mind. Everyone concerned with psychological problems have to deal with the mind, no matter if it looks unscientific in comparison with physical sciences. Psychology cannot be converted into a physical science.

“Clearly sated in words is the teaching of the Buddha (suvakkahto). It is experiential (sanditthiko) and independent of time (akaliko). It is verifiable (ehipassiko) and introspective (openaiko), personally experienced by conscious beings (pacattan veditabbo vinnuhiti).”

1. Introduction- Definition of psychology
2. Mind as the Buddha saw it- Vinnana, Mano and Citta.
3. The ordinary human is dominated by emotions- (cittena niyati loko...)
4. The aim of Buddha is to make reasons dominate the human.
5. Buddha also points out that reason precedes emotion (manopubbangama..)
6. Emotion cannot be educated, but reason can be.
7. When reason is educated, emotion can be brought under full control

8. When reason has understood the problem and its solution, a new goal orientation takes place, which is not to gratify emotions but to eliminate them. Goodness, happiness, and wisdom are not gained by gratifying self-centered emotions, but by eliminating them.

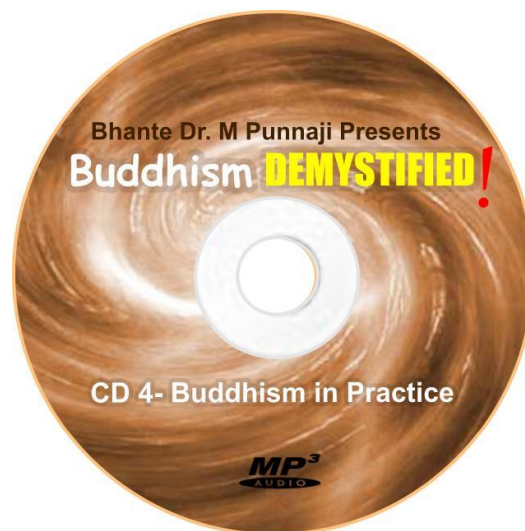
9. Emotion can be eliminated because it is aroused due to a chain reaction that begins at the senses. (pabhassaramidam bhikkhave cittaṃ...)

10. The sublime Eightfold Way is the way to bring about a transformation of the human mind

11. It is a process of evolution of the human mind, which is a psychological process. Unlike biological evolution, this evolution has to be consciously achieved, because it is the evolution of consciousness itself.

12. Conclusion- There are no short cuts or instant results. Progress is a matter of growth and evolution, and it depends on the initial level of emotional and intellectual maturity of the individual who makes a conscious effort to evolve.

CD 4- BUDDHISM IN PRACTICE

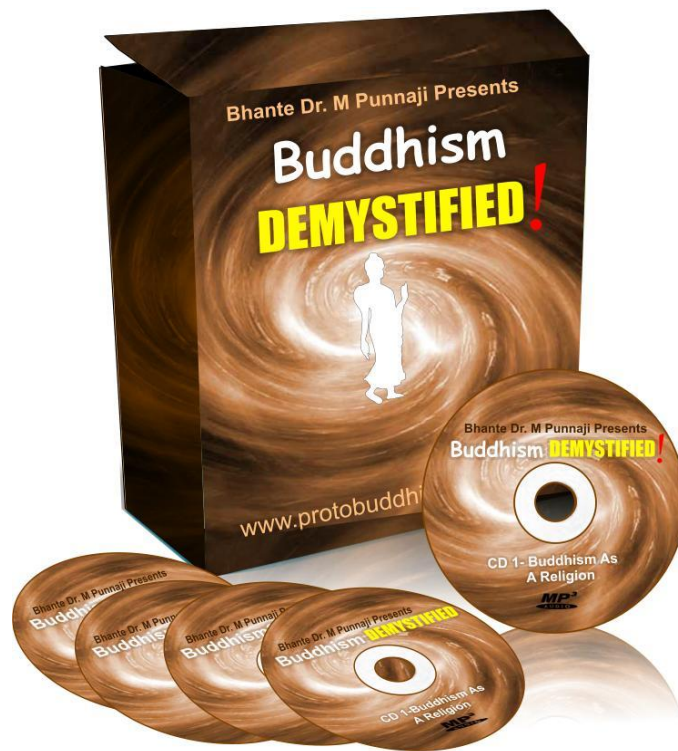


Buddhism cannot be properly practiced without an adequate theoretical understanding. This is why the Sublime Eightfold Way begins with the harmonious perspective. The practice of Buddhism is the solution of a problem, not mere prayer and worship or blind obedience to rules. Practice without understanding the problem and its solution is like try to cure a sickness without a proper diagnosis. Buddhism is also a “do-it-yourself” method of treatment. No one can cure another. It is also growth technique, and therefore a gradual process of growth and development, and not an instantaneous cure.

1. Introduction
2. Practice at two levels- Household and Monastic
3. The path is one, though practiced at two levels- The Sublime Eightfold Way
4. The householder can practice at the first five levels, and occasionally at the sixth level
5. The monastic can practice at the six, seventh, and eighth levels, having passed the first five.
6. The householder is mainly cultivating five things:

- i) Devotion (saddha)
 - ii) Good behaviour (sila)
 - iii) Learning the teaching (suta)
 - iv) Self-sacrifice (caga)
 - v) Gaining in-sight (pañña)
7. The monastic is mainly cultivating five other things:
- i) Devotion (saddha)
 - ii) Will power (viriya)
 - iii) Introversion of attention (sati)
 - iv) Tranquility of mind (Samadhi)
 - v) In-sight (pañña)

8. Conclusion- All practices are aimed at one goal, which is Nibbana. The normal life of the human being is in a disturbed state of the body and mind. Nibbana is a return to the original state of calm, with no more repetition of the disturbance. This disturbance is what is today known as stress. The Buddha was the first to talk about stress, and the first to offer a perfect solution.



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